

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph starting at page 9, line 6 with replacement paragraph as follows:

That is, the operator can engage actuator 28 by a squeezing action, which causes the actuator 28 to pivot at point 27. This squeezing action or motion is preferably translated, by connecting pin 42 and/or biasing member 38, to a linear force that acts on sliding plate 36. Preferably, this linear force is preferably sufficient to overcome the predefined bias of bias member 38 and cause sliding plate 36 to move. Preferably, this sliding movement of sliding plate 36 facilitates cutting blade 50, which is preferably carried by mounting post 40, may be selectively positioned into any of a variety of positions with respect to blade carriage 20 and/or cutting surface 29. It should be understood that other configurations and/or arrangements may also be used to effectuate the selective linear positioning of cutting blade 50.

Please replace the paragraph starting at page 8, line 5, with replacement paragraph as follows:

Referring to FIGS. 3-5, handle 22 may also have an actuator 28 for selectively positioning cutting blades 50 with respect to a cutting surface 29. Actuator 28, like handle 22, can take any of a variety of forms. For example, as shown in FIG. 2, actuator 28 can be integral with blade carriage 20 such that a portion thereof can move to position cutting blade 50 with respect to a cutting surface 29. In another aspect of the present invention, actuator 28 can be a squeeze trigger, as shown in FIGS. 4-5. ~~A locking mechanism 41 can be provided. When actuated, locking mechanism 41 maintains actuator 28 in an actuated position and blade 50 in an extended position such that the operator is not required to maintain pressure on actuator 28. When the locking mechanism 41 is not engaged, actuator 28 is free to rotate to move blade 50 between an extended and retracted position.~~